



April 2, 2009

The Honorable Lamar Smith
United States House of Representatives
2409 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Smith:

I write to express my support for San Antonio Water System (SAWS) project requests for FY 2010 appropriations. As President/CEO of SAWS, I appreciate any assistance you can provide to SAWS public infrastructure projects that maximize ratepayer funding of public projects through a meaningful reinvestment of tax dollars locally in San Antonio and Bexar County.

SAWS requests \$3,000,000 in federal assistance to help fund the Automated Meter Infrastructure (AMI) project. SAWS AMI system conserves water and energy through efficient management. AMI provides critical, real-time data daily to help inform and educate customers about their water bills and water use patterns. Daily, real-time data from AMI provides a great boon to conservation efforts through rapid leak detection, and identification of water use outside of authorized watering periods. AMI also delivers a measure of control with respect to meter reading. Having a system that accurately and effectively gauges water use consumption will provide a better customer service relationship with the rate paying community, while reducing operational expense. If awarded, funds will help purchase 2,000 meters, report on benefits of the system, and assist in conserving 1,360 acre feet of water per year, which also translates to energy efficiency through a reduction in water pumping. Furthermore, the implementation of the AMI system will begin the reduction of SAWS vehicles on the road, contributing to better air quality and a reduction in the use of gasoline and fossil fuels.

AMI is a critical investment in the future of San Antonio's water supply, resource, and conservation. SAWS does not sit idle when faced with drought or abundant rainfall; rather, it plans for contingencies that always place resource protection, conservation, and premier customer service at the forefront of San Antonio's water plans.

Thank you for your consideration of SAWS FY 2010 funding requests. Please do not hesitate to contact my staff or me should you require further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Puente", written over a horizontal line.

Robert R. Puente
President/CEO

RRP/wrp